

WASHINGTON, DC (April 6, 2011) – Today Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) and Doris Matsui (D-CA), Co-Chairs of the House Democratic Caucus Seniors Task Force, joined other members and senior advocates to highlight the impact of cuts made in the 2012 GOP Budget to Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and other programs important to American seniors.

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Under the guise of deficit reduction, House Republicans introduced a budget that seniors simply cannot afford. It would end guaranteed benefits for seniors under Medicare, gut Medicaid's ability to provide long-term care for seniors, and create [a fast-track process to ram through cuts to Social Security](#). The GOP plan builds on previous Republicans attempts to privatize and dismantle these critical programs and tear down vital support for our nation's seniors. Seniors have a median income of barely over \$19,000 a year and without Medicare, many would fall into poverty.

"Make no mistake about the Ryan Republican budget – it is a war on seniors. Newt Gingrich has said we should "let Medicare wither on the vine," – but this Republican budget would chop it down at the roots," said **Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL)**, Seniors Task Force Co-Chair. "The Republican budget principles are simple: Make seniors pay much more for much less while enriching private insurers and drug companies; and put greater financial burdens on seniors – half of whom have incomes below \$19,000 a year – while giving even more tax breaks to the wealthiest of the wealthy. Democrats will stand in the way of their war on seniors."

“The Republicans' budget would privatize Medicare and gut Medicaid only to line the pockets of their Big Oil and corporate buddies who continue to receive government subsidies while making record profits and shipping jobs overseas. But America's seniors understand that cutting benefits does not eliminate the deficit and it does not create jobs; it only hurts America's seniors. We will fight to make sure these harmful proposals never becomes law,” said **Rep.**

Doris Matsui (D-CA)

, Seniors Task Force Co-Chair.

“The GOP Budget is a thinly veiled attempt to rebrand Republican efforts to privatize programs seniors depend on for vital services. It's outrageous that Republicans are asking American seniors to sacrifice potentially life-saving medical care, while giving away tax breaks for corporations that ship jobs overseas and subsidies to Big Oil,” said **Rep. John B. Larson**

(D-CT)

, Democratic Caucus
Chairman.

“The Republican budget is an assault on the dignity and security of America's seniors. They've made it clear they want to dismantle Medicare. They've developed a plan where in the future, seniors would be stuck paying nearly \$7000 more every year—money that would line the pockets of insurance companies, and where they would have to try to find an insurance plan that would cover them, instead of having the security and certainty of Medicare,” said **Rep.**

Henry Waxman (D-CA)

, Energy and Commerce Committee Ranking Member. “We can't renege on the Federal commitment to support quality standards and adequate staff to serve people who are in nursing homes. And we can't turn our backs on people who need help and services to stay out of nursing homes as long as possible, so that they can live independent lives. I stand with my fellow Democrats to do everything possible to be sure this doesn't happen.”

“A budget document really reflect where we place our values as a country - and the American people have seen over the last 14 weeks that the budget priorities of the Republican Caucus are not those of our country,” said **Rep. David Cicilline (D-RI)**. “The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office released its analysis of the Republican budget proposal and found that it increases the deficit and shifts the remaining costs to our seniors, while protecting the richest Americans and giving additional subsidies to Big Oil. In fact, the Republican budget would force our seniors to negotiate with private insurance companies, which breaks the promise we made to our seniors to protect their health care. That’s certainly not an expression of our values and it doesn’t reflect the right priorities to put our country on the path to economic recovery.”

“Don’t be fooled, the Republican plan is not reform. Instead, it is a radical proposal to eliminate Medicare and replace it with a voucher system that cuts benefits for our seniors,” said **Rep. Mark Critz (D-PA)**.

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“This Republican budget plan is no work of genius. Claiming government savings by giving seniors a coupon and telling them to go fend for themselves and eliminating health care for impoverished children, elderly patients in nursing homes, and the permanently disabled is not some revolutionary, new courageous idea. It is simply an abdication of our responsibility as a people to protect our most vulnerable and ensure they get the health care they need,” said **Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL)**.

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“Republicans have made clear in their recently released budget that they are once again taking aim at America’s senior citizens. Their budget would dismantle Medicare and Medicaid, slashing benefits that more than 52,000 seniors in my district rely upon. Our caucus recognizes that we have to tackle our deficits, but we are not willing to do so on the backs of our seniors. Medicare and Medicaid are a promise to seniors; Democrats do not intend to break it,” said **Rep . Laura Richardson (D-CA)**

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"This extreme Republican budget privatizes Medicare and dismantles Medicaid. Denying medical care to America's seniors while protecting tax breaks for the rich is no way to balance our books. Democrats will fight for senior citizens and stand against this cruel Republican budget," said **Rep. Roybal-Allard (D-CA)**.

“It’s a plan that takes better care of CEOs in corporate towers than it does seniors in nursing homes, and it hides its cold-hearted details behind seemingly innocuous phrases and buzzwords like ‘premium support program’ and ‘block grants’,” said **Edward F. Coyle, Executive Director of the Alliance for Retired Americans**

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“Women will also find it hard to understand how Rep. Ryan could think that average Social Security benefits of \$12,000 a year are too high. Or that they can afford to spend more than \$4,500 a year on out-of-pocket health expenses,” said **Joan Entmacher, Vice President for Family Economic Security, National Women’s Law Center**

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“Women will also find it hard to understand how Rep. Ryan could propose slashing programs vital to millions of Americans of all ages, while proposing trillions of dollars in additional tax breaks for the very wealthiest and corporations. Or maybe they’ll understand all too well.

“The Ryan plan would replace the current Medicare program with vouchers and leave seniors and the disabled – some of our most vulnerable Americans – hostage to the whims of the private marketplace,” **Max Richtman, Executive Vice President of The National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare**. “Over time, this will destroy the only health insurance program available to 47 million Americans. Vouchers are designed not to keep up with the increasing cost of health insurance ... that is why they save money.”

“The House Republican leadership has revealed itself as irresponsible and out of touch with the needs of seniors,” said **Jeff Cruz, Latinos for a Secure Retirement Executive Director**, “instead of working to strengthen Medicare and Medicaid, the Republican budget steals from seniors and low-income families to provide tax cuts for the wealthy.”